Indo-Israel relations

2281. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's growing closeness with Israel has created a feeling that it would give up its traditional friendship with Palestinians and also created misgivings among the Gulf countries and Arab world, which are strategically very important for India; and

(b) what action Government have taken in this regard to allay fear of these nations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) India's relations with Israel stand on their own and do not affect our historical and principled support of the Palestinian cause. This policy of steadfast support has been recognised by all the countries of the Arab world.

Closure of Passport Collection Centre at Mangalore

2282. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Passport Collection Centre in Mangalore has been closed;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to re-open the above passport collection centre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) The Passport Application Collection Centre in Mangalore has not been closed.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Undertaking about Abu Salem

2283. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has given an undertaking to the Government of Portugal that Abu Salem, involved in Mumbai